

Lars Mathisen

The Only Things That Makes Reality, is you.

Stalke Galleri, Vesterbrogade 14A

8.3. to 3.4.1996

The Only Thing That Makes Reality, Is You (New Safe Condition & Dead End Path works by Lars Mathisen)

Since 1991, the visual artist Lars Mathisen had exhibited a variety of works—primarily installation-based pieces—under the overarching title *Safe Condition*. The title and the individual works were supplemented by subtitles related to the specific placement or thematic focus of each work. The themes revolved around memory and the choice between safety and life in the present. The concepts of time and space were thus closely linked to the context in which each individual *Safe Condition* work was installed and presented (1).

Alongside the *Safe Condition* project, Lars Mathisen began, in the year prior to the exhibition, working on a Polaroid-based project titled *Dead End Path* (2). This series of wall-mounted works combined Polaroids, passepartout, and frame into unified fields of color or material, appearing as image-boards. The distance between the various functions—frame, passepartout, and motif—was removed, and the composition of motifs created a spatiality that appeared simultaneously round within the image. With *Dead End Path*, Mathisen sought to establish a situation in which the viewer could perceive themselves as part of the room's function, and their presence as part of the installation's working process.

The Only Thing That Makes Reality, Is You was an exhibition consisting of a spatial installation alongside several smaller and larger works. The two projects, *Safe Condition* and *Dead End Path*, intertwined within the exhibition, and Mathisen confronted the viewer with the ambiguous questions raised by both projects—questions concerning physical and mental states of safety, as well as perceptual and cognitive confinement.

The exhibition employed Lars Mathisen's text, previously seen in earlier *Safe Condition* presentations, here staged in a more theatrical form. *The Only Thing That Makes Reality, Is You* partially unfolded through newspapers displaying general photographic reproductions of the artist, edited into patterns of communication and repetition. In these works, however, the newspaper format adopted a humorous tone, fusing textual content with the aesthetic presentation of the image. "The portrait" was used in a narrower sense of classical curiosity directed toward "the other/the one." This became a form of recognition that encouraged self-questioning, values, and self-reflection in relation to the world and to art. The exhibition thus activated the viewer's opportunity to encounter the theatrical idea of being the only thing—among other things.

Notes

(1) *Art Library Puzzle Panel*, Gentofte Art Library, 1991.

HO OH Graphic and layout by HVEDEKORN 4, 1991.

Shooting Gallery "Black Box 2", organized by GLOBE, 1993.

Lost in Paradise, DR-TV Faktas, 1993.

Live Play Act, Malmö Art Museum, 1995.

Neptune Charlottenborg After-Year Exhibition, 1995.

Document in The Past Perfect State, Filmcentralen, 1996.

(2) *Dead End Path* was publicly debuted as part of *Status 2*, STALKE.

The first ten images and published newspaper copies premiered in Malmö.



Lars Mathisen, Installation view 1996